ART BUCHWALD REPORTS

Kennedy Wedding By Popular Vote?

WASHINGTON—Of all the events of 1968, none has had more of an effect on the American people than the marriage of Jackie Kennedy to Greek zillionaire Aristotle Onassis. People who had no opinion on the Vietnamese war, the crises of the cities or the youth revolution all had something to say about Mrs. Kennedy's nuptials.

It seems to me that what Jackie Kennedy didn't realize was that she was the property of the American people and, therefore, that she had no right to choose a husband on her own. If Mrs. Kennedy wanted to get married again, she should have informed the American public of this and let the American people choose a husband for her.

A SPECIAL Republican and Democratic convention would have been called and candidates would have been nominated for her to marry. After the nominations, each candidate would have campaigned for Jackie's hand. They would have explained what they would do for Jackie as a husband, where they would live, and how they would raise Jackie's children.

They also would have traveled across the nation so that Americans could see them in the flesh and decide for themselves which candidate would be the best mate for the former First Lady.

SINCE THEY had so much at stake, the public would have taken far more interest in this campaign than they have in the presidential election.

The climax of the race for Jackie's husband would have been a nationally televised debate between the candidates, so the electorate could see for itself how each man would behave under pressure.

Finally, on election day, Americans from all walks of life would have gone to the polls and voted for the person they wanted to stand at Jackie's side.

In case neither candidate got a majority of the electoral votes, then the House of Representaives would have chosen the man privileged to be Jackie Kennedy's husband.

Once the majority of the American people had made their decision, we all would have abided by it, with no one complaining that he didn't have a vote in Mrs. Kennedy's marital affairs.

This would have been the American way of doing things. Perhaps Mr. Onassis might have won the election; perhaps he might not. But at least the election would have prevented the confusion and despair now rampant over the Kennedy-Onassis wedding.

EVEN THOSE who are on Jackie's side admit that it wasn't whom she married, but the way she did it, that has caused so much concern in this country.

No woman of Mrs. Kennedy's stature has a right to decide affairs of the heart by herself. Her marriage was everybody's business, and the least she could have done was poll the American public before she made a decision that affects the lives and pocketbooks of us all.

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